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WASHINGTON

June 21, 1962

Dear John:

In response to Secretary Rusk's letter of June 16 proposing establishment of a Task Force Southeast Asia, we have received a number of useful comments from the interested agencies.

I thought you should know that the action directive establishing the Task Force incorporates several of these comments and includes a number of important points beyond those contained in Secretary Rusk's previous letter.

Task Force Southeast Asia will take direct cognizance over all of Southeast Asia including the jurisdiction of the former Viet-Nam Task Force. Because of the importance of this assignment, Governor Harriman has undertaken to serve personally as Chairman of Task Force Southeast Asia. Mr. Cottrell has been appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs and will serve as full-time Deputy Chairman of the Task Force. The work of the Task Force will be organized under two working groups: A Thailand-Cambodia-Laos-Burma working group with Mr. Koren as Executive Director; and a Viet-Nam working group with Mr. Ben Wood as Executive Director.

In addition, I have specifically requested that Task Force Southeast Asia assume responsibility for keeping the Special Group (CI) informed as to matters which fall within its particular competence as set forth in NSAM 124.

While

The Honorable  
John A. McCone,  
Director,  
Central Intelligence Agency.

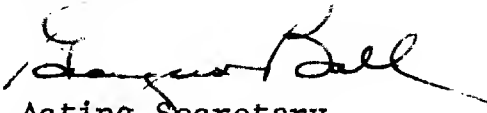
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While a number of other useful comments and suggestions have been made in connection with the project, I believe that, with the exception of the points covered above, these matters can most usefully be dealt with by the representatives of the respective agencies in the Task Force itself. Governor Harriman now proposes to convene the group at an early date.

Sincerely,

  
Acting Secretary

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